

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in this application, claims 6-9 having been withdrawn from consideration. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to more clearly set forth the subject matter recited therein. Support for the amendments to claim 1 may be found in claim 1 as originally filed. Thus, no new matter is added by these amendments.

I. Restriction Requirement

The Office Action makes final the September 26, 2003 Restriction Requirement. Applicants note that the September 26, 2003 Restriction Requirement and the January 20, 2004 Office Action do not address claims 10-14, which were added by Preliminary Amendment filed March 11, 2002 (copy enclosed). While Applicants do not necessarily agree with the Restriction Requirement, Applicants respectfully submit that, because claims 10-13 parallel claim 6, claims 10-13 should be considered part of Group II for the purposes of the Restriction Requirement. Similarly, Applicants respectfully submit that, because claim 14 parallels claim 9, claim 14 should be considered part of Group III for the purposes of the Restriction Requirement.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claim 1 make clear that claims 1-5 are directed to a process for manufacturing a card with multiple tips, rather than to the card itself. In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 has been further amended to replace the phrase "active conducting area" with --conducting tracks--, which is recited earlier in claim 1. Thus, Applicants submit that claims 1-5 are not indefinite. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over PCT Publication No. WO 98/45716 to Belmont et al. The Office Action further rejects claim 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent 6,289,583 to Belmont et al. Belmont 583 issued from the U.S. National Stage Application of International Application No. PCT/FT98/00718, which issued as WO 98/45716. Thus, Applicants treat the rejections over these references (collectively “Belmont”) together. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Independent claim 1, from which claims 2-5 depend, sets forth, in pertinent part, a “process for manufacturing a card with multiple tips ... wherein: a first adhesive metal layer (20) of small thickness is deposited on the flexible film made of insulating material, second metal layer (22) is deposited by vacuum or electrolysis on the first adhesive layer (20) to form the material of the future conducting tracks, the metal tips (26) are achieved by a combination of a first UV photolithography operation making use of a thick photosensitive resin and electroforming by means of a metal-ion electrolyte, selective etching of the second metal layer (22) and of the first adhesive layer (20) is performed by means of a second UV photolithography operation to obtain the conducting tracks, and a superficial passivation insulating layer (24) is deposited on the conducting tracks.”

In order to anticipate a claim, the reference must disclose, in specific embodiments, all of the limitations of the claim. That is, a prior art reference anticipates the claimed invention only where all of the claimed elements of the claimed invention are disclosed, either expressly or inherently, in the reference. Scripps Clinic & Research Foundation v. Genentech, Inc., 927 F.2d 1565, 1576, 18 USPQ2d 1001, 1010 (Fed. Cir. 1991); In re Marshall, 577 F.2d 301, 198 USPQ 344 (CCPA 1978). Belmont does not disclose, in specific embodiments, each and every limitation of the invention of independent claim 1, or its dependent claims 2-5, and thus cannot anticipate claims 1-5.

Belmont discloses a process for manufacturing a card with multiple tips in which a thin metal layer is deposited onto an insulated surface, such as silicon, gallium arsenide, quartz or glass. See Belmont, col. 2, lines 45-51. The substrate is then coated with a photosensitive resin to obtain a uniform layer. See Belmont, col. 2, lines 53-54. UV photolithography operations are performed on the substrate, tips are electroformed on the substrate, and the insulated resin dissolved by means of a solvent. See Belmont, col. 2, line 56 - col. 3, line 40.

However, Belmont does not disclose the use of a flexible insulating film as the substrate, as required by claim 1. Rather, Belmont discloses only rigid materials, specifically, silicon, gallium arsenide, quartz or glass, as substrates. Thus, Belmont fails to disclose, in discrete embodiments, at least the limitation of depositing a first adhesive metal layer onto a flexible film made of insulating material.

Applicants thus respectfully submit that claims 1-5 are patentable over Belmont. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-14 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

March 11, 2002 Preliminary Amendment

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